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GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PC WITH OUR PRACTICAL TIPS

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HOW TO...

Be a charitable music fan

Want to pick up a music bargain online and give money to a worthy cause at the same time? With Big Noise Music you can treat yourself and help others, as Xavier Cortez explains

Legal music downloads are gaining popularity at an astonishing rate and you can read an authoritative guide to the online music scene in *Shopper* next month. If you can't wait that long, here's a great music service that you can try without much expense, and with the added bonus that you're making the world a better place.

Big Noise Music is an online music store with a difference: for every pound that you spend, 10p goes to Oxfam. It's easy to set up an account, after which you can buy tracks from 75p each and stream them direct from the site for just a penny, so you can listen to 40 albums for just £5. Big Noise Music is a great way to discover new tunes.

1 Go to www.bignoisemusic.com and click on the Login link. Click the option for new users, set up an account and buy some credit. One credit is worth a penny. The least you can spend is £2, but spending more gets you extra free credits. You can pay with all major credit and debit cards.

2 You can start browsing for music, but you won't be able to listen to it yet. When you try to preview or download a track, you'll be prompted to install a browser plug-in. If you have Windows XP with Service Pack 2 installed, Internet Explorer won't let the plug-in install

automatically. You need to click the yellow bar at the top of the screen, then click Install ActiveX Control and follow the installation instructions. After installation, you may get a pop-up that says, "A security update is required to play this file." Click Yes and you'll be ready to go.

3 Browse or search for the music you want, and use the Stream or Download links to play them once, or buy WMA files to keep. If you have a broadband connection, click My Account, Preferences and select the Broadband/Cable option. You'll be able to stream the music at high-quality 128Kbit/s rather than 32Kbit/s. **CS**

